

# COMIC CUTS

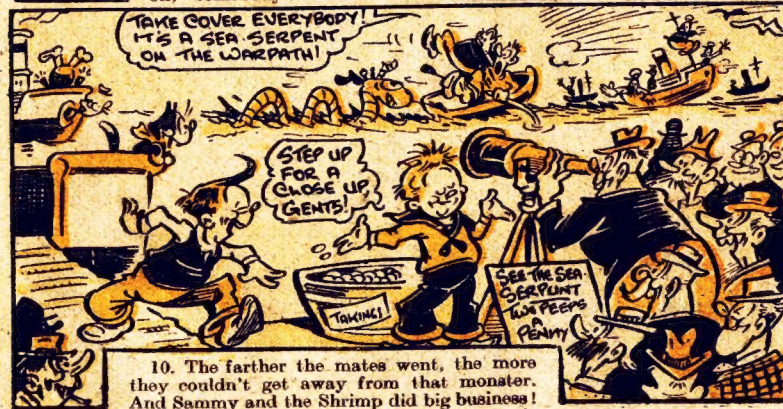
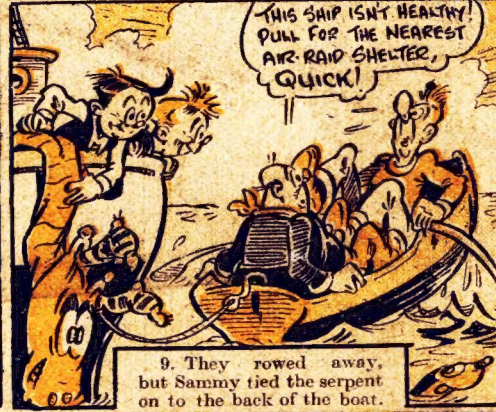
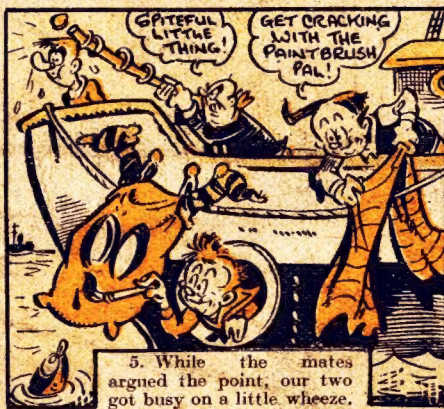
## AND LARKS

29

[No. 2,753.]

SAMMY AND THE SHRIMP GIVE THE MATES A GOOD SEND-OFF!

[NOVEMBER 4, 1944.]





A thrilling adventure of two dauntless R.A.F. chums.

# U BOATS LAIR!

Beaver the Bold!

THE Commanding Officer of the La Roche air station south of the River Loire, where fighters and bombers of the Royal Air Force were based, stood beside a large wall-map. For fifteen minutes he gave the assembled airmen a breezy lecture on the general course of the war, and the progress made in the north and south of France.

"And now," he said, after a pause, "I want to speak of something of special interest to you fellows of the bomber squadron. It's about the target for to-morrow, a target of vital importance such as you haven't had for many a long day."

Flight-Lieutenant Buck Salter of the fighter section, settled farther back in his seat, his spirits dampened by a slight sense of disappointment. He was one of the half-dozen Canadians at La Roche, himself hailing from Quebec Province like his bosom pal, Flight-Sergeant Floyd Simm, popularly known as "Beaver," who had often flown with him in Mosquitoes in the past.

His gaze wandered through a window to a number of planes on the tarmac, including his own which was marked with a long white arrow. The small, red-faced Beaver, a former student at McGill University, sat a few seats away with his eyes half-closed as if he were day-dreaming.

But now in his deep, even voice, the C.O. was talking about another phase of the war. The German U-boats, which had been a pest in the Atlantic, had been driven out of Lorient, St. Nazaire, and La Pallice, their chief bases. But another school of them had come in from the deep ocean, not having enough fuel-oil for the long voyage back to Germany. A British air-scout, flying low in mist, had caught a lucky glimpse of them on the surface. A full score of large-type U-boats had met off the Basque coast, and were heading for shelter at the port of Montaille in the estuary known as the Bassin d'Arc.

"The mist in the south prevents bombing to-day," the C.O. stated, "but we have reports that the wind is veering and to-morrow should afford the chance we're aching for. Let us destroy this nest of Hun pirates in the Bassin d'Arc—here's the waterway on the map—and our ships in the Atlantic will have nothing more to fear from them. We must know their exact position, though, to make this full-scale bombing raid effective."

His next words made Buck Salter stir in his seat.

"I'll send a couple of fighters over to scout early in the morning," added the C.O. "All right, Salter, I have you in mind and Simm, too. It'll be a risky job for you'll have to go in at low level to get a good view of the port and estuary. You'll report by radio in code,

## INITIAL SUCCESS!



Teacher: "What is the meaning of C.I.D.?"

Bobby: "Coppers in disguise, sir!"



Beaver lighted some bits of tarred rope and flung them in the spirit.

and if successful you'll have to drop markers over the moorings just before the bombers go in."

The details of the raid were left, but Buck and Beaver talked things over later when they were alone together.

"I've gotta hunch, brother," remarked Buck, "that we won't see anything worth a tinker's cuss from the air, not even when the weather clears. Tin whales can be got into covered pens, or they can be disguised easy so you wouldn't know 'em from French fishing smacks."

"Exactly," said Beaver. "The only way for us to get a close-up look is by going on the ground."

There was logic in his startling suggestion, and the daring of the plan that Beaver unfolded only added to its attraction from Buck's viewpoint. So the pair requested to see the Commanding Officer to whom the sergeant repeated his plan.

The vital importance of destroying those long-range U-boats swayed the C.O. to a favourable frame of mind. The night would be moonless. Buck and Beaver, suitably disguised in Basque clothes and black berets and armed with a small radio transmitting set, would be dropped at midnight from a plane at a chosen spot some distance outside the port of Montaille. A scouting plane would precede a strong force of Allied bombers in early daylight, but it was hoped that the intrepid pair would know by that time the precise position of the U-boats and radio the information in code to the Fortresses, Lancasters and Halifaxes of the raiding squadrons. To prevent trickery by the enemy, past-master in misleading radio transmissions, the message was to be preceded by SS in Morse—initials of Salter and Simm—and the code word "arrow" from the name of Buck's fighter aircraft.

Some time after darkness had fallen. Buck and Beaver started on their novel and hazardous mission with the good wishes of all their airman-pals ringing in their ears.

A swift flight of less than four hundred miles, and the plane went into a long slanting dive. The coast was sighted through the mist, and a landmark noted north of the estuary called the Bassin d'Arc. Then the machine skirted the port of Montaille without interference, rose higher and circled the selected area where, it was hoped, the parachute jumps might be made in secrecy and safety.

A hatch was opened and a member of the crew stood close to Buck and Beaver who were tensed ready for the leap into space.

"Ready? Go!"

The pair hurtled out in quick succession, pulled the rip-cords when clear of the plane and felt the tug of the harness as the dark-coloured canopies opened above them. Below was a grassy plateau where they were to land, and there they would be picked up by an R.A.F. plane on the following night if they survived.

Buck felt the chill of the night in his bones. For minutes he drifted in an unreal world of swirling mist with occasional glimpses of a dark, swaying object which he knew to be Beaver descending not far away. Then suddenly, what looked like black arms and clawing fingers reached up toward him. With swift energy he pulled the cords of his chute to swing aside, aware that here was a tree that might injure or entangle him.

His body swung clear, but a tough twig caught in the thin satchel and strap that held the wireless transmitter and split the cloth. There followed the crackle of breaking twigs and then, to Buck's utter dismay, a resounding thud as the precious radio set crashed to the ground!

## The Hidden Lair.

LUCKILY, Buck landed safely, got clear of his parachute by the quick-release, and was gathering in the silken folds when Beaver thumped upon the grass less than fifty yards away.

"The little transmitter, pard!" choked Buck, as they met; "the darned thing got ripped outta the satchel as I skirted the top o' that tree."

"Tough—mighty tough," mused Beaver ruefully. "Still, I guess that's not the only portable radio transmitter around this part of the Basque country. We shall have to get in touch with some of the French patriots and borrow another."

They started to walk on a compass course, taking the useless transmitter and the folded parachutes with them and seeking the river. They found it after about twenty minutes, weighted the chutes with stones and sank them and the radio set in the flowing waters. Then, avoiding houses and vineyards, they followed the stream to the port of Montaille two miles farther on.

Now it was nearly two o'clock in the morning, and mist was swirling in the almost deserted streets before a freshening wind. The disguised British airmen paused in doorways or made short detours to avoid the occasional German soldier or French gendarme who were the only people they saw or heard.

They moved furtively through narrow streets and came out upon the quays where there was more activity, and therefore the need for even greater caution on their own part. A few small ships and a number of barges were being loaded or unloaded by the light of dimmed lanterns which made the wreaths of mist look like phantoms drifting in the darkness.

"First thing," breathed Buck, "is we've gotta find those tin whales, and after that—"

"Look!" He heard Beaver's tense voice in his ear and felt his grip on his arm. "Get a load of this! Can you see what I can see?"

Buck peered round a store shed in the direction indicated and blinked several times before he could believe the evidence of his own eyes. There in a large dock basin with but one narrow entrance was a whole flotilla of craft, twenty in all, with conning-towers each marked with the letter "U" and a number in white paint.

"The whole nest of 'em!" croaked Buck. "They're moored opposite the oil tanks, and those things like durn great snakes sprawled over the wharf are the oil-pipes. Gee! What a target for to-morrow!"

"To-day, you mean," grinned Beaver. "Our heavies will be over in about four hours—and there are the tin whales and the fuel tanks all neatly grouped together for them!"

"They sure are right now," smiled Buck. "We oughta get a hold of a transmitting set somehow in case the Huns put up a smoke screen."

The pals crept round the shed and into an open doorway as two German naval officers came that way, talking in low guttural tones. They paused, and one of them called in French to some local quising to help "get some more casks of cognac loaded into the boats." Then, after the officers had gone, they kept out of sight while a Frenchman, who looked like a Customs official, and a few German sailors rolled over several barrels from the large store.

"Say, Buck," whispered Beaver hoarsely, "this shed is full of spirits—and begosh! there's nothing like alcohol to make a real roaring fire! If we set fire to this shed the spirits will burst all over the place and the wind drive the flames on to the oil tanks."

Buck drew a deep breath. "Buddy, you've got something!" he muttered.

They awaited their chance, carefully watching the movements of an armed German marine who was on guard in the area. But the other Nazis were busy near the oil tanks, shifting what looked like rolls of camouflage netting and large paint pots.

Moving about quietly in the shed, Buck opened two or three casks of cognac and allowed quantities of the stuff to pour out upon the wooden floor. Then Beaver lighted some bits of tarred rope, and flung them into the spirit.

"Come on!" snapped Buck. "We've gotta beat it!"

They dived out of the place and slithered along in the dark shadows outside the store shed until they reached a timber yard at a safe distance away.

An awe-inspiring sight met their gaze. The blaze grew with amazing speed, and before the dismayed Germans could take efficient action the fire spread to the tanks. These must have been less than half full, but the oil ignited, and flaming streams flowed over the quay and upon the water in the dock.

Then, to the utter bewilderment of the chums, one boat after another caught fire. The hulls burned like dry tinder, and one conning-tower after another opened out and collapsed.

"Say! Those things aren't submarines at all!" gasped Beaver. "They're nothing but disguised wooden scows with sheets of painted tin fixed on 'em!"

The clever trick of the Germans was revealed. Not a U-boat was in the dock, and the whole stunt was only to lure the Allied bombers to batter the wrong target in the event of aerial attack!

But where was the submarine flotilla? While Germans and quising strove to get the blaze under control, the airman-pals began another search along the waterfront. And then, just before the break of day, they discovered the secret of the U-boats' lair. A mile further up the estuary was a large jetty, but what at first looked only like heavy metal piles under it proved to be the conning-towers of the sheltering flotilla. The "jetty" consisted of nothing more than thin planks and roofing material placed over the craft, thus screening them completely from the air.

"Begosh, we can't get a radio set now," muttered Buck, "so how are we going to let our fellows know where these babies are lurking?"

But Beaver was equal to the occasion. On higher ground overlooking the U-boat pen was a rough roadway with a grassy border to the edge of a small chalky cliff. At his suggestion they rolled six white boulders of chalk in position on the grass, setting them in groups of three to represent the dots of S in the Morse code. Two S's and an arrow were to be the sign, arranged by the C.O. at La Roche for identification by the Allied bombers. And beyond the white boulders the pals laid out a long piece of timber and two shorter pieces to form an arrow pointing directly to the secret lair of the German submarines!

Smoke was still rising from the fire at daylight when the powerful Allied squadrons flew over—and there, all unknown to the Germans, was the sign showing the whereabouts of the pirate flotilla. The airmen saw it and drew their own deductions, and down thundered a devastating storm of bombs to pound the fleet into useless wreckage!

But Buck and Beaver were not in the neighbourhood. They saw the terrific blow struck from a cave in the hills four miles away, from where on the next night they were easily able to reach the plateau to join the plane to take them back to La Roche and a right roaring welcome!

(Don't miss Friday week's rousing Merchant Navy thriller.) 4-11-44





### The Hatleigh Towers Mystery.

TWO men were seated round a crackling log fire in a big open grate. One was Seton Grenville, the wealthy owner of Hatleigh Towers. He was a handsome, dignified man, approaching sixty.

The second man was much younger, not more than thirty. He was good-looking, too, and the likeness between the pair was unmistakable. Rex Madden was the elder man's nephew.

"I wish Mr. Steel would come," remarked Seton Grenville. "I know he's on the way—he said he would be leaving at once when I phoned him. All the same—"

"Oh, I shouldn't worry, if I were you," broke in the younger man. "The weather's pretty rotten, plenty of fog and mist about. If he's driving down, he may have a job to get here at all. Personally, I think it was quite unnecessary for you to call him in, uncle. This business could surely have been dealt with by the local police."

His uncle was about to make some reply to this, when the sound of the front door bell was heard.

"Ah! That may be Mr. Steel now," ejaculated Seton Grenville.

It was. A few moments later, Kenton Steel, the famous detective, his face flushed from exposure to the keen November air, was shown into the large, spacious apartment.

"Come right in, Mr. Steel," said Grenville, rising. "No doubt you will be glad to warm yourself after your drive down."

"The air is a bit nippy," confessed Steel, with a smile, "but it's nice and cosy in here."

Seton Grenville pulled up a chair by the fire for the detective, and then seated himself again.

"My nephew—Rex Madden," he said, indicating the young man on the other side of the fire.

"Pleased to meet you," said Steel, with a nod, stretching out his hands to the warmth of the fire.

He gave a glance round the room, noticing with admiration the numerous oil paintings, mostly portraits, which adorned the panelled walls.

"Now then, Mr. Grenville," said Steel suddenly. "I am at your service. About this robbery which occurred last night—"

"Yes, I will tell you all about it—or as much as I know, which is very little really," replied his client. "You see, I went to bed at the usual hour last night, somewhere about eleven. I slept like a top, and when I woke this morning, nothing seemed to be amiss. I did not notice anything wrong, at any rate. It was later that I suddenly discovered that one or two things were missing. I questioned the two maids, but they knew nothing about it, and had not removed the articles for cleaning, or polishing."

"So, somewhat puzzled, I searched still further. And I discovered that a considerable sum of money I happened to have in the house had also vanished. It was obvious that the house had been burgled during the night. At first I thought of calling in the police, and my nephew strongly advised me to do so."

"Well, I thought that the local police could deal with a case of burglary such as this appears to be," chimed in young Madden. "Besides, they would have been on the spot right away, and time is often important in these matters."

"That is so," agreed Steel with a smile. "Still, now that I am here, I hope that I shall be as successful as the local police might have been."

He turned to his client.

"I take it you heard nothing during the night?" he inquired.

"Nothing at all," was the reply. "As it happens, I slept very soundly last night—very soundly indeed for me. I had been sleeping very badly for over a week. Every night I developed a splitting headache which kept me awake. I'd been taking a couple of

aspirins nightly to try and bring me relief, but without effect till last night."

"You took two aspirins last night?" asked Steel.

"Yes, and they did the trick," was the reply. "I dropped right off, and I don't remember anything more till I woke this morning."

Steel nodded and looked thoughtful for some moments. Then he turned to the nephew.

"And you," he said, "did you hear anything suspicious during the night?"

"No, I can't say that I did," was the reply. "But if an expert cat-burglar broke into this house—and it's my theory that that is what happened—he would not be likely to make the slightest sounds to betray his presence, would he?"

"No, but he might leave clues behind," was Steel's retort. "Let's go over the house, Mr. Grenville. Show me from which rooms the missing articles were taken, and also any likely spots where you think the thief might have made an entry."

"It would be fairly easy for a good climber to make his way up the wall on the west side of the house," broke in Rex Madden. "It's pretty well covered with ivy, and has been for goodness knows how long. It's tough enough to hold any man's weight, I should say."

Seton Grenville proceeded to take Steel on a tour of the house, and Madden accompanied them. He was obviously keenly interested in the bur-



The wine glass suddenly shattered to pieces in Steel's hand!

glary, though he had his own opinion as to how it was perpetrated, and obstinately aired his views.

Steel listened with patient tolerance, and for his part hardly spoke beyond asking a question now and again as they went from floor to floor and room to room.

But if the detective saw anything in the nature of a clue, he did not betray the fact. His face was mask-like as the tour proceeded.

"Here's where, in my opinion, the burglar got in," said Madden presently when they were on a landing. "Through this window."

He threw it up as he spoke, and invited Steel to join him in looking outside.

"See all that ivy," Madden went on, pointing. "I'll bet the thief climbed up here. It wouldn't be a very big climb, and the catch of the window is broken, as you see. So he'd have no trouble in opening it, would he?"

"Not if he knew beforehand that the catch was broken," was Steel's quiet retort.

"But don't you think—" began Madden, when his uncle interposed.

"I think, Rex, it would be better to leave Mr. Steel alone and let him draw his own conclusions," he said. "He has the matter in hand, not you."

Madden shrugged and pouted sullenly for a moment. Then his face cleared, and he dug his hands in his pockets.

"Right-ho, I'll leave you to it," he said, and walked away, whistling.

"He means well," laughed Grenville. "He's very anxious to try to show how he thinks the burglary was committed."

"Yes, I've noticed that," retorted Steel quietly. "Very anxious indeed. Well, we'll go into the rooms along this floor and that'll be about all, I think."

They passed along a corridor, going into various rooms. One proved to be that of Rex Madden's, and Steel gave it a very searching examination with his keen eyes. He even pulled out a drawer and turned over the contents.

"Hallo! A gun with a silencer!" he remarked, picking the weapon up and examining it intently. "What on earth is your nephew doing with a thing like that?"

"Oh, it's a souvenir he brought back from abroad," explained the detective's client. "I don't even know if the thing works."

"It seems to be in perfect condition," commented Steel, as he put it back and closed the drawer. "All right, let's get along."

### The Wineglass Clue.

ONE room yet to be visited was Seton Grenville's bed-room. It proved to be a fairly large apartment with big furniture that had stood the test of time for many a year.

By one side of the head of the bed was a small mahogany table. On it was a portable electric lamp and a wineglass, in which was about a teaspoonful of what looked like water.

Steel picked up the wineglass and peered at the contents.

"I have that to swallow my aspirins," explained his client quite unnecessarily. "Some people have difficulty in getting them down. I don't—just a mouthful of water and down they go. That's all

asked, seeing his uncle and the detective seated solemnly round the table. "Going to do a trick, or something?"

"I'm not going to do a trick," replied Steel quietly. "But I may possibly find out how a certain trick was done."

"I—I'm afraid I don't get you," said Madden, his expression showing his perplexity. "What's the wineglass for?"

"It's the one your uncle used last night when he took his usual two aspirins," replied Steel, fixing the young man with a relentless, penetrating gaze. "As you can see, a little of the water still remains in the glass. But there is also a sediment—and I'm going to try to find out what it is."

"Why, what—what good will that do?" Madden wanted to know.

"I have every hope that it will enable me to find out the identity of the thief last night," said Steel calmly. "That's why I am taking charge of this wineglass, until I have satisfied myself by experiment just what that sediment is."

"I—I see," said Madden. "Then, in that case, if you're going to be busy, you won't want to be disturbed. I'll push off and leave you to it. See you later, perhaps."

Madden went quickly out of the room. Steel waited till the door had closed. Then he picked up the wineglass.

"Tell me if you can detect any odour," he asked, passing it to Grenville.

But that gentleman, after several sniffs, shook his head.

"Can't smell a thing," he said. "Of course, I don't suppose my nose is anything like as keen as yours. What do you suspect?"

"A drug," replied Steel. "Good heavens!" gulped Grenville, starting back. "You—you don't mean it, surely?"

"I do," Steel went on. "That would account for your sleeping so soundly last night for the first time for over a week. It was not due to the aspirins at all. You were deliberately drugged to keep you safely out of the way while the thief went about his business. And to clinch the matter, I am going to have this sediment analysed and give you proof."

As he finished speaking, Steel picked up the wineglass and rose to his feet. Then, before he could continue speaking, a startling thing happened.

Mysteriously and for no seeming reason at all, the fragile wineglass suddenly shattered to pieces in Steel's hand. He gave a startled gasp which was loudly echoed by his flabbergasted client.

"I say, what on earth—" Grenville began, shooting to his feet.

But Steel had recovered from the shock and was already moved to swift action. He darted to the door, flung it open, and raced up the stairs. There he made for Rex Madden's room, which he found to be empty.

He grasped the drawer he had already opened, and drew it forward. But of the gun with the silencer there was no sign. It was no longer there.

"So I was right," muttered Steel, with an intake of breath. "This clinches it."

He waited where he was, standing close behind the door. In a few moments it was pushed open, concealing the detective, and Madden hurried into the room, a trifle breathless, his eyes shining excitedly.

Pulling open the drawer, he flung into it—a gun with a silencer. And next instant he was firmly grasped from behind and swung round, to find himself face to face with Kenton Steel.

"You!" gulped Madden, his face going a ghastly grey.

"Yes, the game's up," retorted Steel. "You robbed your uncle last night, having first drugged the water in the wineglass. That was why it was so vital to you that it should be smashed, to get rid of the damaging evidence. You hid outside the open window, and when the chance came, fired at the glass—and hit it. But I already knew about that silent popgun of yours—so I was waiting here, ready for you."

And there was nothing left for Rex Madden but to make full confession that confirmed Steel's accusations.

(Another thrilling Kenton Steel story next Friday week.) 4-11-44









Our waiter tried to please the customer. He even helped him out with the butter. The old nuisance got rough and caught it hot. So Waddles elicked.

## PLUM AND DUFF, THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE!

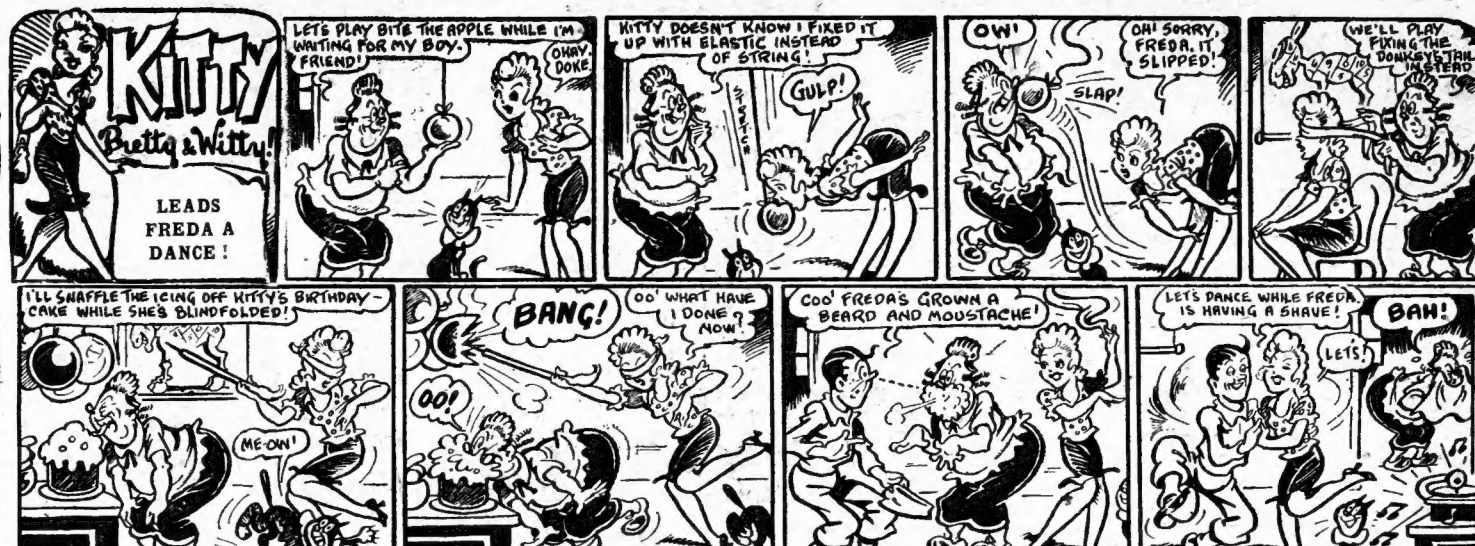


7. So they started to play it, but once again Suet butted in. Yes, he hoofed both the oompah and the clarinet well up into the air with his boot.

8. "That's stopped your row!" he snorted. "As you've been told, Bogey can't stand it!" But the instruments stuck in a barrage balloon.

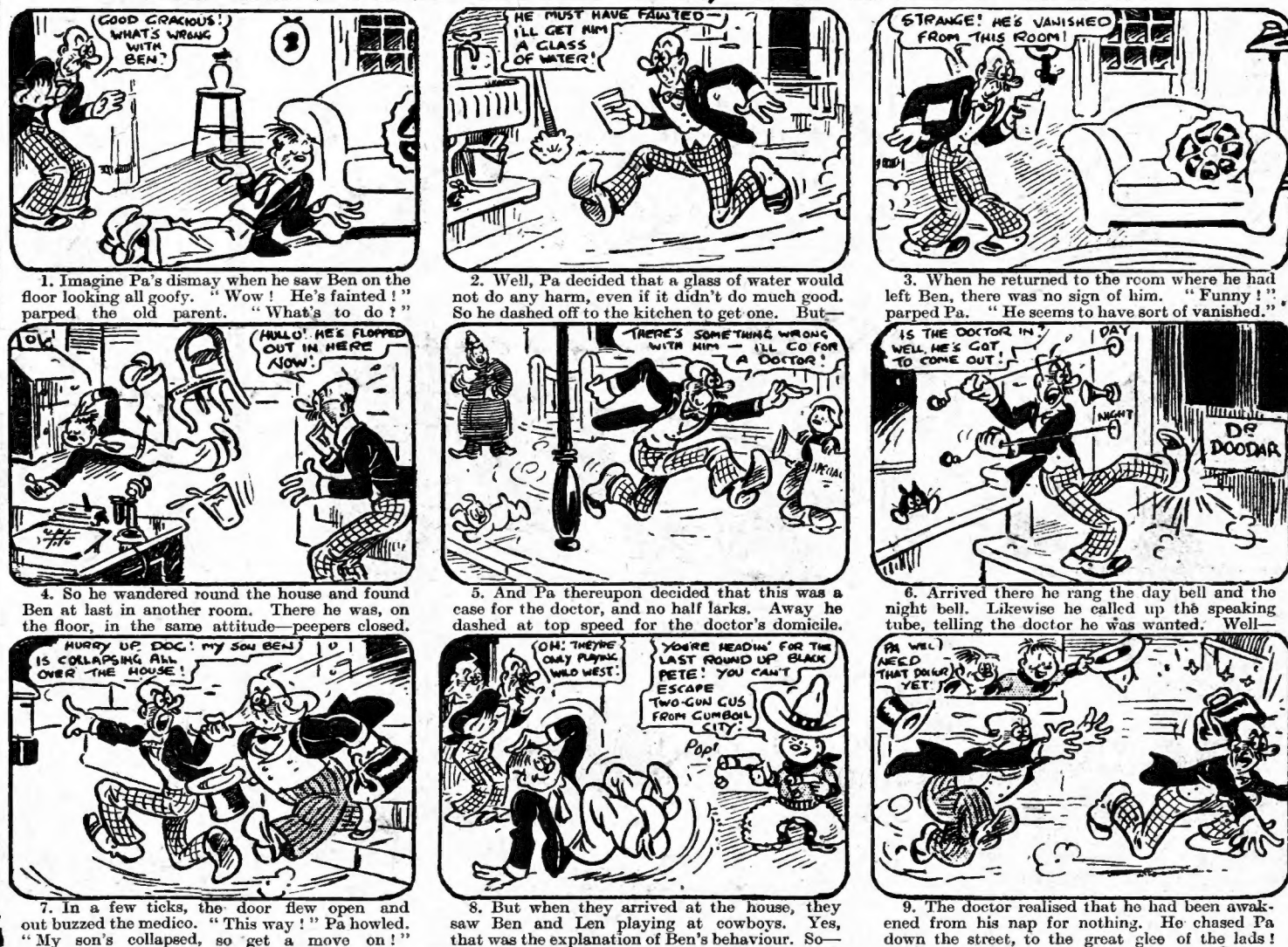
9. So there they were, well up aloft, making a proper to-do. And as Suet couldn't take them out, Bogey took it out of him instead. What-ho!

## COMIC CUTS KING OF COMICS.



Freda's little party joke ended so un-apple-y that she blindfolded Kitty while she sampled the cake. But Kitty scored over her n-ice-ly and had all the fun.

## BIG BEN AND LITTLE LEN, THE LARKY LADS!



1. Imagine Pa's dismay when he saw Ben on the floor looking all goofy. "Wow! He's fainted!" parped the old parent. "What's to do?"

2. Well, Pa decided that a glass of water would not do any harm, even if it didn't do much good. So he dashed off to the kitchen to get one. But—

3. When he returned to the room where he had left Ben, there was no sign of him. "Funny!" parped Pa. "He seems to have sort of vanished."

4. They all fell into Duff's oompah, and Plum wondered what had become of them. So he asked Suet who said they'd find that out soon enough.

5. Now Duff decided to have a final puff ere putting the oompah back in cold storage. Then out shot the spuds—and Suet became a target. Ow!

6. However, most of the spuds finished up getting firmly spiked on the barbed wire. "Hi! That looks like a tune!" chortled our two heroes.

7. In a few ticks, the door flew open and out buzzed the medico. "This way!" Pa howled. "My son's collapsed, so get a move on!"

8. But when they arrived at the house, they saw Ben and Len playing at cowboys. Yes, that was the explanation of Ben's behaviour. So—

9. The doctor realised that he had been awakened from his nap for nothing. He chased Pa down the street, to the great glee of the lads!



1. "You're for the high jump this afternoon, so get up them stairs, Martha!" said the commandant to me when I turned up for fire drill. So up I went.

2. "Oh dear! I hope I fall on something soft!" says I to me as I shut my eyes and dived for the old rescue blanket. But Lena planned to let me down.

3. And no doubt I should have landed with a nice large size bump if Marcus had not twiggled her game and pushed his play-ball underneath me.

4. "Tee-hee! That's a bit of a come-down for old Fatty," Lena was chuckling to herself, after letting go the blanket accidentally for the purpose.

5. But I soon took the smile off her face, chums. For as I rebounded off the ball it got in the way and I was able to use her dial as a doormat. How's that?

6. "Ha, ha! That was boot-ifully done, Martha!" laughed our commandant. Lena was so upset that I had to drag her away.—MARTHA. 4-11-44



CUTS  
COMICS.

And  
PINKY

WHERE DID  
GET THOSE  
SS?

ONE IN THE  
BOW'S-NEST!

AND HE GAVE  
ME ONE!

FOUND IT ON  
THE PORT-SIDE!

ended with a  
not twiggd  
derneath me.

**KITTY Butta & Witty!**

LEADS FRED A DANCE!

LET'S PLAY BITE THE APPLE WHILE I'M WAITING FOR MY BOY. OHAY DONE

KITTY DOESN'T KNOW I FIXED IT UP WITH ELASTIC INSTEAD OF STRING! GULP!

OW! OH! SORRY, FRED, IT SLIPPED!

WE'LL PLAY FIXING THE DUNKY'S TAIL INSTEAD.

I'LL SHAFFLE THE ICING OFF KITTY'S BIRTHDAY CAKE WHILE SHE'S BLINDFOLDED!

ME-OW!

BANG!

OO! WHAT HAVE I DONE? NOW!

COO! FRED'S GROWN A BEARD AND MOUSTACHE!

LET'S DANCE WHILE FRED IS HAVING A SHAVE! BAN!

Freda's little party joke ended so un-apple-y that she blindfolded Kitty while she sampled the cake. But Kitty scored over her n-ice-ly and had all the fun.

# BIG BEN AND LITTLE LEN, THE LARKY LADS!

GOOD GRACIOUS! WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEN?

HE MUST HAVE FAINTED - I'LL GET HIM A GLASS OF WATER!

STRANGE! HE'S VANISHED FROM THIS ROOM!

1. Imagine Pa's dismay when he saw Ben on the floor looking all goofy. "Wow! He's fainted!" parped the old parent. "What's to do?"

2. Well, Pa decided that a glass of water would not do any harm, even if it didn't do much good. So he dashed off to the kitchen to get one. But—

3. When he returned to the room where he had left Ben, there was no sign of him. "Funny!" parped Pa. "He seems to have sort of vanished."

4. So he wandered round the house and found Ben at last in another room. There he was, on the floor, in the same attitude—peepers closed.

5. And Pa thereupon decided that this was a case for the doctor, and no half larks. Away he dashed at top speed for the doctor's domicile.

6. Arrived there he rang the day bell and the night bell. Likewise he called up the speaking tube, telling the doctor he was wanted. Well—

7. In a few ticks, the door flew open and out buzzed the medico. "This way!" Pa howled. "My son's collapsed, so get a move on!"

8. But when they arrived at the house, they saw Ben and Len playing at cowboys. Yes, that was the explanation of Ben's behaviour. So—

9. The doctor realised that he had been awakened from his nap for nothing. He chased Pa down the street, to the great glee of the lads!

GOOD GIRL!

TEE-HEE!

I BELIEVE LENA DID THAT ON PURPOSE!

4. "Tee-hee! That's a bit of a come-down for old Fatty," Lena was chuckling to herself, after letting go the blanket accidentally for the purpose.

5. But I soon took the smile off her face, chums. For as I rebounded off the ball it got in the way and I was able to use her dial as a doormat. How's that?

6. "Ha, ha! That was boot-ifully done, Murtha!" laughed our commandant. Lena was so upset that I had to drag her away.—MARTHA. 4-11-44



# ROYER JOE

Joe Lashes Out.

"SAY, sonny, ain't you a newcomer 'round these parts?"

Rover Joe, seated in the little saloon at Three Pines, addressed himself to a tall, serious-faced young man who was leaning disconsolately on the counter with an air of utter dejection about his whole being.

"Yeah, guess I'm a newcomer," was the reply. "An' mighty fed-up I am with this pesky dump."

The little range wanderer studied the speaker keenly. He knew without being told that he was not only new to the Wild West, but he was in some form of trouble. And in his big-hearted way Joe felt he would like to help him, if help he needed.

From shrewd questioning he learned that the lad, whose name was Phil Denver, had been working for little more than a week as a range-hand at the 2-Bar Circle Ranch, and already he was deploring the urge that had led him to leave a steady job in the city to seek adventure as a cowboy in the cattle country.

"Oh, the life's O.K., but I wish I'd never seen the 2-Bar Circle!" he grated glumly. "It's Jed Barson, the foreman," he went on. "He's a cheap bully who kinda finds enjoyment in findin' fault with everything I do."

Rover Joe was not surprised to hear this. He had heard plenty about the 2-Bar Circle foreman—but precious little to the man's credit.

"But I won't stand it much longer," Phil Denver declared, his eyes blazing. "I'll get even with Barson—I swear I will!"

"Aw, shucks, son!" Joe retorted, a grin spreading across his wizened features. "You don't wanta talk like that, kiddo. After all—"

The little roamer broke off as a din of footsteps and voices sounded from outside; then into the saloon marched a crowd of noisy range-hands. They were from the 2-Bar Circle Ranch, and at their head stalked Jed Barson, the bullying, gun-slinging foreman.

The din was suddenly silenced as Barson stepped arrogantly towards Phil Denver, a vicious leer on his travel-grimed face. Joe sat tense and alert, waiting and watching. As for Denver, the youngster had turned deathly pale.

"So we've found yo', eh, Denver?" Barson began, his voice little better than a snarl. He stepped a pace nearer, menacingly. "Now then, hand over the cash and the other stuff yo' pinched from these fellers, yo' dirty young crook. Come on—where is it?"

Phil Denver tensed, an angry flush now colouring his cheeks. Instant denial flashed to his lips.

"Don't lie!" Barson barked. "Guess I'm too old a bird to be hoodwinked by your baby-faced air of injured innocence. All the boys up at the ranch ha' been robbed—an' we know yo're the rat—"

"I don't know what you're talking about!" flashed Denver, bravely facing

up to the sneering foreman. "I've never touched a thing that ain't mine."

Urged on by the menacing mutterings of the punchers behind him, Jed Barson suddenly flung out a hand and grabbed Denver by the knot of his 'kerchief. There was a brief struggle, punctuated by the excited cries of the other 2-Bar Circle hands. Then the lad was flung back into his seat and Barson, with a coarse, triumphant laugh, held aloft a gold ring, studded with flashing diamonds. In the struggle he had apparently snatched it from Phil Denver's shirt pocket!

"Here it is, boys! It's my ring!" roared Barson. "He had it in his pocket."

The bunch of range-hands drew closer around Phil, threatening and demanding that he be handed over to the sheriff without further delay.

During all this time Rover Joe had sat silent. He hardly knew what to think about it all. Surely the discovery of Jed Barson's ring in the lad's pocket was proof enough that he was a thief. Yet he couldn't bring himself to condemn the youngster, who even now was loudly protesting that the whole thing was a frame-up.

Suddenly Joe decided to take a hand. He rose slowly and deliberately to his feet.

"Say, Barson," his cold, calm voice broke into the din, "hold yore horses. Guess this lad oughta be given the chance to prove what he says."

"Shut yore trap!" snapped Barson, swinging round upon Joe. "You under-sized little tramp, when I wants yo' to butt in I'll ask yo'!"

"Pr'aps he's in it, too," cried one of the range-hands. "He looks a crook—"

But whatever else the man would have said was drowned in the sudden cry of warning that rang from the other 2-Bar Circle men.

Phil Denver, forgotten for the moment, had whipped out a gun. It was levelled at the bullying foreman's back. The lad's white finger was pressing on the trigger—

Joe's eyes widened with a sudden start of fear. Next moment he leapt across and up flashed his bunched right fist. It caught the lad full on the jaw and sent him toppling backwards, the gun tumbling from his nerveless fingers.

As the foreman and his cronies recovered from their surprise they closed menacingly around the rugged little Westerner. Guns flashed and the situation looked desperate.

Joe had struck Phil Denver to prevent him starting a gun-fight—which would have suited Barson's book. But now Joe seemed to have started more trouble for himself.

"Yo' interferin' little runt!" Barson blazed, whipping out his six-shooter. "I'll fill yo' full o' holes and—"

"Stand where y'are an' don't blink an eyelid!"

Joe's sudden command cut Barson short. And there was something about the rugged little man with a gun now glinting in his white-knuckled hand that struck fear into the hearts of the 2-Bar Circle men.

"Put them shootin' irons away," Joe went on, speaking in his lazy drawl, a perky glint now flashing in his eyes. "An' you, Barson—Oo-urgh!"

Next instant Joe's voice died away in a gurgling groan. One of the punchers had moved stealthily to the rear of the saloon and, whipping up a chair, he crashed it down over Joe's head.

The little roamer slumped to the floor, out to the wide!

It was more than an hour before he recovered to find the Three Pines saloon deserted except for the bearded proprietor, who was bending over Joe, forcing icy cold water between his lips.

Joe sat up dazedly and rubbed his bruised and aching head. Then, as realisation of his position seemed to flood over his numbed brain, he pulled himself to his feet.

"Say, where's Barson—an' that lad Denver?" he demanded.

"Barson and his crowd went off and took Denver with them," came the man's reply. "I heard 'em say they were heading for the ranch."

Joe whipped up his battered hat and, with a determined glint in his steely eyes, went clattering out of the saloon.

Sheer Bluff!

THE stocky little range tramp was soon riding hard out of Three Pines to the 2-Bar Circle Ranch, astride Sleepy, his gallant old grey. And there was a worried expression on Joe's wizened face, for with Jed Barson in his most dangerous mood things might go hard for young Phil Denver—very hard indeed.

But when Sleepy was cantering easily along the hill trail some way from the ranch Joe's ears suddenly picked up the sound of voices—angry voices. And one of them he recognised instantly as belonging to Jed Barson.

Reining in sharply, Joe tethered Sleepy, and then cautiously and with every sense alert, he approached a thick copse. Peering through the bushes, his stocky figure tensed and his eyes narrowed grimly at the sight before him.

Jed Barson and three of his range-hands were trying to force Phil Denver to tell them where he had hidden the stuff he had stolen from the men at the ranch. The lad was standing defiantly on a fallen tree-trunk which was protruding over the edge of a crevasse. There was a noose around his throat and the other end of the rope had been thrown up and over a tall fir standing near by.

"One last chance, yo' thievin' rat!" rasped Barson, stepping towards the lad's precarious perch. "Spill the beans or yo'll swing on that rope's-end! Where's the stuff?"

He paused significantly, a vicious

sent the other men cowering back like cringing curs.

Then things happened quickly. Menaced by Joe's guns, Jed Barson was forced to release Phil Denver, who seemed bewildered at his sudden change of fortune. Next Joe told the lad he had rescued to blindfold Barson and the punchers with their 'kerchiefs and to rope their hands behind them.

"Now, son," he drawled, "walk each of the rats to the edge of the crevasse." He winked at Phil and made strange signs with his hands as the lad started to lead the whining protesting men to the spot indicated by Joe.

Then while the four cronies stood shoulder to shoulder, Joe slipped a long noose around their heads and pulled it just tight. The other end of the rope was laid on the ground, but with enough tension to make it appear that it was suspended from a tree.

It was all sheer bluff on Joe's part, for Barson and his pards were in no danger of being hurt at all—let alone hanged. Yet the blindfolded men were not to know this.

"O.K., Barson!" Joe's calm voice broke the silence at last. "Now spill the beans. Where's the stolen stuff? Aw, don't whine! I know yo're the dirty thief—guess I can prove it. I give yo' jest one minute to confess, then I pull the rope."

The bullying foreman began to bluster and threaten, but Joe started to count slowly and deliberately. He had reached one hundred and ten—ten seconds left!—when Barson, all his arrogance and bluster gone, blurted out:

"O.K., guess yo' win!" he shouted in a voice filled with craven fear. And while Joe stood cluckling and Phil Denver listened in open-mouthed amazement, the bullying foreman made a full confession.

He had been systematically robbing not only his ranch boss, but also the range-hands at the 2-Bar Circle. When Phil Denver had been engaged he had hit upon a foul plan to plant evidence which would not only safeguard himself against any suspicion, but would also condemn the newcomer as the thief.

"Guess I planted that ring o' mine in the boy's pocket down in the saloon," Barson concluded in a voice of despair. "The rest of the stuff is in Denver's suitcase—"

"The dirty rat!" Phil Denver suddenly blazed, and he would have taken the law into his own hands if Rover Joe had not grabbed his arm and hauled him back.

Next moment, whispering a few words in the lad's ear, Joe stepped forward. The smiling little wanderer yanked off the noose and snatched the blindfold from the eyes of the first two men, while Phil Denver did likewise with Barson and the other puncher. The four men rubbed their eyes and blinked in surprise as they stared down in front of them.

But before they had recovered from their amazement Joe and Phil shoved them full in the back—and Jed Barson and his cronies fell forward, to sprawl on their faces in a half-filled, slimy ditch!

They had not been standing on the edge of the crevasse at all. They had been utterly and completely bluffed by Rover Joe, who stood roaring with laughter.

"Come on, son!" he chuckled at last, grabbing Phil's arm. "Guess we'd better hit the trail for the ranch. Reckon Barson and his pards won't dare show their grubby faces in the 2-Bar Circle again. If they do—waal, sheriff'll be waiting for 'em!"

"Thanks a lot, old-timer," said Phil gratefully. "But how did you know that Barson was the thief?"

"Gee, I didn't!" Joe grinned. "It was jest a shot in the dark—but it came off!"

(Rover Joe and Sleepy will be jogging along the trail to more adventures in Friday week's number.)

4-11-44



Up flashed Joe's bunched fist and caught him full on the jaw.

leer on his evil face. Joe, hidden by the copse, couldn't decide whether the foreman was only bluffing, but whether he was or not, Phil Denver was in grave danger. And like a flash the little Westerner acted.

"Don't move, any of you! These popguns are likely to go off bang!"

Before any of the men in the clearing could blink an eyelid Joe stepped forward, his guns levelled menacingly. But there was an amused grin on his leathery face at the petrified, hollow-jawed expressions of Jed Barson and his cronies.

"Stand jest where y'are, Barson," the little wanderer gritted, jerking his guns. "Yo' others step back to that tree and release that rope. Move—pronto!"

Cowed by that ringing command and as though mesmerised by the steely glint in Joe's eyes, the men obeyed without a murmur of protest.

"Now sling yore shootin'-irons into the crevasse!" was Joe's next command. "That means you, too, Barson. Out with 'em!"

But as guns went flying over the edge of that steep drop, he caught a flashing glance from Barson to one of the men. Almost in that same split second Joe fired. Mingled with the echoing of that barking report came a yell of pain from one of the punchers as he swung round and grabbed at his shattered right hand.

Acting on Barson's signal, the man had meant to shoot Joe, but the little roamer had fired first. And the result



She: "I do believe one of my feet is larger than the other!"  
He: "Oh, no; smaller if anything!"

Readers who have difficulty in obtaining regular copies of COMIC CUTS are advised to place an order with their newsagents immediately.



## A Very Funny Story:

## UNDER ESCORT!

## A Wily Wheeze!

THE communicating door opened and Mr. Tiffin, the boss, passed through from his private office to the one beyond. Here worked his two clerks, Wally Wopple and Charlie Green, but at the moment only Wopple was to be seen.

"Where's Green?" asked Mr. Tiffin, a chubby, bald-headed man.

"He's not back from lunch yet, sir," replied Wopple.

"Not back from lunch?" echoed Mr. Tiffin, with a glance at the clock on the wall. "But it's a quarter past, two. Lunch is from one to two."

"Yes, sir, but I believe he went out late," explained Wopple. "He had a job he wanted to finish."

"I see," said the boss with a nod. "Well, when he does come back, I want him to come with me to the station to meet my niece. She's arriving by the two-fifty to stay the week-end with us. I want Green to escort her to my house as I cannot spare the time myself. So I hope it won't be long before Green gets back from lunch."

With that, Mr. Tiffin returned to his own office. But a couple of minutes later he was back again with a letter in his hand.

"Oh, I want this letter taken round by hand this afternoon," he said.

"Very good, sir," said Wopple, as he took the letter and put it on his desk.

Once more the boss went back to his private room, leaving Wally Wopple looking anything but pleased as he stared at the letter.

"Humph! Some people have all the luck!" he growled. "Green seems to have clicked all right, I must say. He's to spend the afternoon escorting the boss' niece. I've seen her—she's been here more than once, and she's a corker—a real peach."

The scowl on his face deepened as he pictured Charlie Green doing the gallant with Mr. Tiffin's niece.

"And meanwhile," Wopple went on, grinding his teeth, "I'm to carry on with my office work, of course. On top of that, I suppose old Tiffin expects me to cart that letter round. It's a good mile and a half walk, too. And while I'm doing that, Green will be dodging work and enjoying himself. It jolly well isn't fair."

The more Wopple thought it over, the more annoyed he became. Suddenly his face cleared, however, and his peepers lit up as he had an inspiration.

"There's Green coming back now," he muttered. "I can hear him coming along the corridor. I'll jolly well do it and chance it!"

With that he snatched up the letter, darted across to the door and passed out into the corridor. There, sure enough, was Charlie Green, a good-looking young chap with a smiling face.

"The boss wants you to deliver this letter at once," said Wopple quickly. "It's urgent."

Charlie Green took the letter, and his smile faded when he saw the address and realised the long walk he had to go.

"Oh, all right," he said. "I'll cut along right now. It's a nice afternoon, and it'll make a change from sitting in the office. See you later."

Off he went, all unsuspecting, and the scheming Wally Wopple returned to the office, grinning all over his long, thin face.

"Done it!" he gurgled. "He fell for it all right. That's got him out of the way. So, with luck, the boss will take me along to meet his niece instead. And if there's a row afterwards, well, it can't be helped. I'll risk that."

Five minutes passed. Then Mr. Tiffin came bustling briskly into the outer office.

"Isn't Green back yet?" he snorted, glaring round the office.

"He's been back, sir, but he's gone off with that letter you wanted delivered," explained Wopple, looking the picture of innocence.

"Gone off with that letter?" hooted Mr. Tiffin. "But I wanted him to come with me to meet the two-fifty train. By the time he gets back, it'll



The unhappy Wopple staggered along as best he could.

be too late. I meant you to take that letter along."

"I—I'm sorry, sir," stammered Wopple. "I—I misunderstood."

"Well, it's done now," barked the boss. "Green can't come with me to meet that train. What am I to do?"

"Can I be of any assistance, sir?" inquired the wily Wopple. "I should be only too pleased to escort your niece to your house, as you can't spare the time to do so yourself."

Mr. Tiffin pondered this offer for a few moments.

"Oh, all right," he said at last. "I should have preferred Green, but you'll do in the circumstances. We'd better be getting along right away."

"Very good, sir," tootled the delighted Wopple, swallowing the not very complimentary reference to himself. "I'm ready when you are."

They put on their hats and left the office. The railway station was reached five minutes before the train was due.

The train arrived on time and a number of passengers got out. Mr. Tiffin and Wopple scanned them eagerly. But there was no sign of the young lady they had gone to meet.

"Bother it!" snorted the boss when the last of the passengers had gone out of the station. "She's missed the train! Just like her! I suppose she'll be coming along by the next one. I'll find out when it is."

On inquiry he learned that the next train would not be for over half an hour.

"I can't possibly hang about all that time," he snorted. "And I can't come back, either. You'll have to remain here, Wopple, till the train comes in. You know my niece by sight, of course?"

"Oh, yes, sir; she's been to the office several times," lisped the delighted Wopple. "I'll wait with pleasure, sir. I'll see that she reaches your house all right."

So Mr. Tiffin went off, leaving Wopple to wait. The next train came in, but once again there was no boss' niece aboard.

"I'll wait for the next one, then," decided Wopple. "It's a bit of a nuisance, hanging around here all that time. But it'll be worth it when she does turn up."

As it happened, the young lady was on the next train. Wopple sighted her and made a dive for her.

"How d'you do, Miss Tiffin?" he tootled, doffing his hat. "I'm here to meet you. Your uncle is too busy, unfortunately. So he wants me to escort you to his house."

"Thank you, that's very nice of you," replied the young lady, who was as pretty as a picture. "Will you get a taxi while I see to my luggage?"

"Certainly," gurgled Wopple, and made a dive outside.

But he promptly saw that all available taxis had already been taken and the rank was absolutely empty. He returned to tell Miss Tiffin the news.

"Oh, dear!" she cried. "What a nuisance! We might have to wait here for hours, and I do hate hanging about."

"But why not walk to your uncle's house?" suggested Wopple, who wanted to enjoy the damsel's company as long

as he could. "I'll carry your luggage with pleasure."

"Will you really?" she cooed. "That's awfully sweet of you. Here it is."

A porter came up just then, pushing a truck. On it were two very large portmanteaux, a smaller one, and a big hamper. And when Wopple learnt that all this belonged to his fair companion, he nearly screamed aloud.

"I really don't know how you're going to carry it all," said Miss Tiffin, after dismissing the porter with a tip. "You've kindly offered to do so, and no doubt you'll be able to manage it."

The more Wopple stared at that array of luggage, the more he wondered how on earth he was going to carry it all. At last, when the young lady was showing signs of impatience, he set about it.

He balanced the hamper on his head, tucked the small bag under one arm, and grabbed the large portmanteaux, one in each hand. Thus loaded, he started on the journey to the boss' house.

All his delight at escorting Mr. Tiffin's niece had completely vanished. Loaded like a pack mule, it was not long before he felt doubled up.

To make matters worse, he did not even have the company of the fair charmer. She trotted on ahead, powdering her nose, while the unhappy Wopple staggered along behind as best he could.

He will never forget that walk as long as he lives. He had to stop for frequent rests, he ached in every muscle, and every hundred yards seemed a mile.

"I wish I'd never started out on this lark!" he moaned. "It would have been far better if I'd delivered that letter for the boss and let Charlie Green click for this lot. Oh, my poor back! I'll never get it straight again unless I'm pushed through the mangle!"

Only one thought consoled him. That was that he felt sure he would receive some reward at the end of his ordeal.

"Perhaps I shall be invited in to tea," he muttered. "Let's hope so. I can do with a cup, and I deserve something after all this."

At long last Mr. Tiffin's house was reached. Not once all the way had the young lady said a word to Wopple, which was perhaps as well, for he had no breath or strength left to answer back.

He felt cramped all over, and things were beginning to swim before his eyes. With a loud sigh of thankfulness and relief, he let drop the bags and the hamper on the pavement by the gate.

Through blurred eyes, he saw Mr. Tiffin himself come out of the house and greet his niece, who kissed him affectionately on both cheeks. Then the boss called to Wopple.

"Bring those things up to the house, Wopple!" he said.

Wopple bent to pick up one of the bags. But instead of doing so, everything suddenly went black, and down he went beside the luggage, out to the wide.

A few sips from a glass of water brought him round, and he saw Mr. Tiffin standing over him.

"You don't seem too grand," said the boss. "You'd better get along home as quickly as you can. I'll get a taxi for you."

One happened to be coming along, so Mr. Tiffin hailed it. He assisted the wide-eyed Wopple inside, and told the driver the address to take him to.

"Here's a pound, Wopple, to pay the fare," were Mr. Tiffin's parting words.

"You can give me the change in the morning. Hope you'll be better tomorrow. Sorry you couldn't stay to join us. Green has come along to spend the evening, and I should have liked you, too. But you're not in a fit state to enjoy yourself at the moment. Thanks for looking after my niece, and get to bed directly you arrive home. Right-ho, driver!"

And away whizzed the taxi, taking the disillusioned and disappointed Wopple, who realised that by his trickiness he had overstepped himself.

(Another merry earthquake in Friday week's number.) 4-11-44

# The Ovaltine's OWN COLUMN OF AMUSEMENT



CHIMNEY SWEEP'S HEAD  
A DUCK'S HEAD  
A PIG'S HEAD  
A VASE OF FLOWERS  
GRANDPA'S HEAD. A BIRD



More of these pictures to follow

ALL Ovaltineys are healthy, happy boys and girls, because it is one of their golden rules to drink 'Ovaltine' every day.

'Ovaltine' provides important food properties which you need to make you strong and vigorous, and to build up body, nerve and brain.

For these reasons ask your mother to make 'Ovaltine' your regular daily beverage. It will help you to excel in sports and games, and to be successful in your school-work.

## OVALTINE

for Health, Strength & Energy



# PINHEAD and PETE

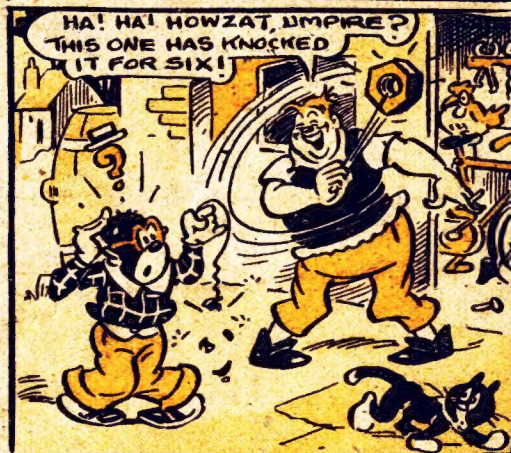
THE COON IS A "CONKER"-ING HERO!



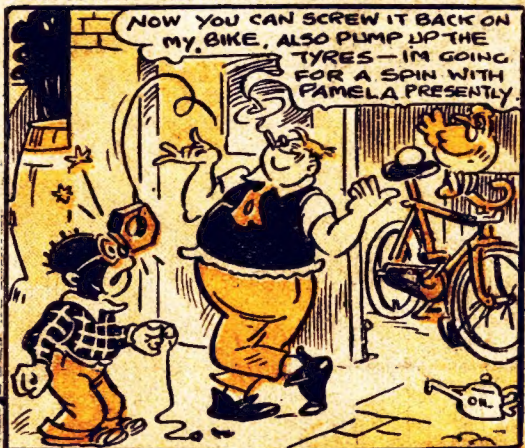
1. When Pete arrived home the other day, after a morning out with the lads of the village, he proudly showed Pinhead his champion conker. "Dis am de nut ob nuts!" said the coon. "It am unbreakable!"



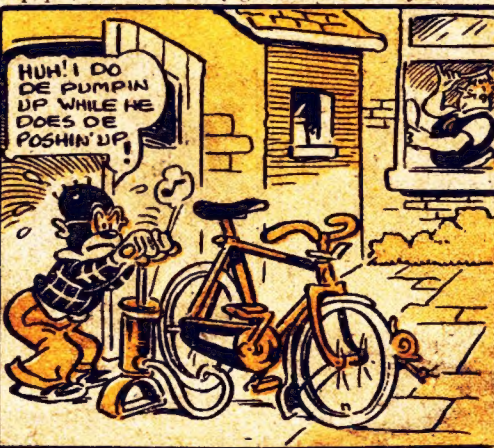
2. Then Pinhead, who had been working hard on his bicycle all the morning getting it ready for the road, thought he would have a little game. "Hold it up, pal," he cried. "I've got a nut to stonk yours!"



3. So Pete held up his champion conker, and next ticklet got the shock of his sporting career. For the big boy smashed it to bits with one swipe of his nut. "Ha, ha! Had you on a bit of string!" he cried.



4. "You see, this nut is off my old bike," the big boy laughed light-heartedly as he playfully let it drop on the coon's sniffer. "Now you can screw it on again and pump some fresh air into the back tyre!"



5. And, leaving Pete to get on with the good work, Pinhead popped indoors to doll himself up, as he had promised to go for a spin with Pamela. "It am like his cheek to leave de pumping to me!" said Pete.



6. Then, finding it too much like hard work, the coon thought he would knock off and fix the lock nut. But while he was trying to find it, out rushed Pinhead looking very posh. "Now for a jolly jaunt!" said he.



7. And, thinking his bike was now in first-class condition, he vaulted nimbly on to the saddle and pushed off with all speed. "Hi! Half a mo!" cried Pete. "Let me fix dat pump and dis nut!"



8. "Sorry, I can't stop now—I'm in a hurry!" replied Pinhead, and he pedalled merrily on until the pump suddenly came swinging round and tapped him on the topknot. "Dat's caused it!" cried the coon.



9. Anyway, it stopped the big boy a treat and put paid to his giddy caper. And when Pamela came on the scene, she said: "Climb aboard, Petey, and I'll take you for a ride. He's too wreckless!"

